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YES SOUP FOR YOU...

WARM HEARTS FILL EMPTY BOWLS AT 'EMPTY BOWLS' FUNDRAISER

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PHOTO OF MARIA AND ANNA LOZANO ENJOYING BOWLS OF SOUP BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

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Sheriff finds historic postcard of old jail in the mail

BY STAN MADDUX

Like on any normal day, La Porte County Sheriff Ron Heeg was opening mail at his desk when, suddenly, he found inside one of the envelopes an antique postcard depicting an in-color image of the old La Porte County Jail.

In the lower righthand corner of the postcard was the handwritten date of Aug. 20, 1916.

The envelope also contained a typed letter written by Lowell Joerg, a 96 year old man from California, who explained he stumbled upon the postcard in an antique store many years ago in his home state.

He's quoted in the letter as saying "By golly, I think I'll send it back home where it can be appreciated. Heritage is important."

Joerg is a long time collector of postcards, who in recent years has made it a practice to return postcards to their place of origin.

In response, Heeg said he purchased about 50 stamps and sent them to the man for him to send more postcards to their "rightful homes."

Heeg said he also thanked the man in writing and wrote him a brief history of the old jail built from Indiana limestone. It opened in 1907 and was torn down to make way for the new jail, which has been in use since 1977.

The sheriff described the standard sized postcard arriving in the mail on Valentine's Day as being in "remarkable shape," with no post marks or any writing on it.

Heeg said he plans to frame the postcard and place it somewhere within the building for the public to view.

Former Sheriff Jim Arnold vividly remembers the old jail because his father, Cliff, lived in a four-bedroom residential section of the multi-story building when he was sheriff for two terms in the 1960s.

Back then, Arnold said sheriffs were expected to live in the jail because the job from having much lighter staffing was viewed more as a round the clock position.

Arnold, who became the sheriff for two terms beginning in the late 1990s, said he moved in with his father at the old jail for a short time after returning from military duty in 1967.

He later began his career as a deputy at the sheriff's office, which was housed in the same building as the old jail.

Arnold said the current jail, which is just a short distance from where the old jail stood, can house about six or seven times as many inmates as the old facility, which had room for roughly 50 or 60 offenders.

He was stunned to learn about the postcard and see a picture of the old jail on it.

"I looked at that and said, 'Oh, my gosh.' It just brought back so many memories of when you worked there," he said.

The greatest Art of all, the consistent practice to determine what is truly good and what is truly evil; sense impression after sense impression, feeling after feeling, judgment after judgment.
— Dino N. Fatouros

Local Government Meetings

New Buffalo Times

Democracy Requires Transparency

CITY OF NEW BUFFALO
VANCE PRICE, MAYOR
CITY COUNCIL
MARK ROBERTSON, ROGER LIJEWSKI, KAREN GEAR, RICH KNOLL, VANCE PRICE
City Council meets on the 3rd Monday of each month at 6:30PM
CITY OF NEW BUFFALO PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS
Meets on the 1st Tuesday of each month at 5:30PM
NEW BUFFALO TOWNSHIP BOARD
HOWARD MALES, MICHELLE HEIT, MICHELLE HANNON, PATTY IAZZETTO, BARBARA ANDERSON
Board meets on the 3rd Monday of each month at 4PM
NEW BUFFALO TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
Meets on the 1st Tuesday of each month at 6:30PM
SHERIFF BERRIEN COUNTY
Sheriff, Chuck Heit
Undersheriff, Greg Sanders
NEW BUFFALO AREA RECREATIONAL AUTHORITY
Meets at 10AM on the 2nd Wednesday of every other month (odd) at New Buffalo Township Hall, 17425 Red Arrow Highway New Buffalo
NEW BUFFALO AREA SCHOOLS BOARD
LISA WERNER, JOHN HASKINS, DENISE CHURCHILL, JENNIFER SUMMERS, VANESSA THUN, STEPHEN DONNELLY, GREG VOSBERG
CHIKAMING TOWNSHIP
CHIKAMING TOWNSHIP BOARD
DAVID BUNTE, PAULA DUDIAK, LIZ RETTIG, RICHARD SULLIVAN, ARTHUR ANDERSON
Chikaming Board meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 6:30PM
CHIKAMING TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
Meets on the 1st Wednesday of each month at 6:30PM
THREE OAKS
THREE OAKS TOWNSHIP BOARD
Meets on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7PM
VILLAGE OF THREE OAKS BOARD
Meets on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7PM
GRAND BEACH
Meets on the 3rd Wednesday at 5PM EST
KIMBERLY WOLNIK, CLERK-TREASURER
HARRY WALDER, JACK GRACE, ED SEBASTIAN, PETER DOERR, EDWARD BRANDES
MICHIANA
VILLAGE OF MICHIANA COUNCIL
Meets on the 2nd Friday of each month at 1PM

Village Council hears updated water report

BY THERESE DONNELLY

The Three Oaks Village Council had a water update at its Wednesday, Feb. 12, meeting.

Mat Lindsey, a maintenance worker with the village, said the department had flushed both sides of the affected line and were in the process of identifying and cleaning dirty spots left. Lindsey explained the camera had broken down earlier in the day, causing a delay in work, while a new camera could be brought in. All February water samples tested clean, Lindsey said, but the department will continue to chlorinate the water until the line is completed.

Village President Dan Faulkner said once the water samples are cleared by the State of Michigan, the village will eliminate chlorine treatment.

Councilmember Jason Niemzyk asked if it would be possible to chlorinate just in the affected section of line, but Lindsey said it would be difficult to isolate the section from the rest of the system.

The Village of Three Oaks has received an award in recognition of its work in adding trees to the community.

The Rotary Club of Harbor Country presented the Golden Trowel award at the meeting, with an official ceremony scheduled for Feb. 19. The award is in recognition of the village's cooperative work with the Rotary to provide and plant trees for village tree lawns at no cost to residents as part of the Village Forests Program.

The council voted to approve a temporary easement right of way to AEP to perform work related to the Hickory Street bridge, but with the condition that AEP provide clearer language regarding a timeframe. The temporary easement will give the power company the ability to temporarily relocate utility lines to an area that includes the community garden on Oak Street, along with the right to clear vegetation for access. While the first page of the agreement stated the easement would expire Dec. 31, 2025, unless renewed, village attorney Charles Hilmer said later pages implied the easement would continue in perpetuity.

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Representatives from engineering firm Wightman and Associates, which is supervising the project for the village, cautioned a delay in the easement approval could slow down the project and increase costs.

The council also passed a resolution to approve an agreement with Wightman to oversee the engineering portion of the project to improve the bridge that spans over the Amtrak line.

In keeping with state regulations, the council passed a zoning ordinance amendment to regulate daycare centers in residential areas.

The council discussed the purchase of a speed radar sign to place at the south end of town. Niemzyk asked if the sign on North Elm deterred speeders and Police Chief Carl Krause said he had seen some effect, and the sign does collect data that can be downloaded to evaluate.

The Council approved the annual Planning Commission report with no comments.

Nancy Hartel will sit on the Planning Commission to complete Mike Springer's term expiring Nov. 30, 2026. Springer resigned from the commission to take a seat on the council.

Judy Mondello will sit on the Public Service Committee. Councilmember Lois Jones asked about the maximum number of committee members. Faulkner said the village had not set a limit as the group was initially informal, but the village can create guidelines now that the committee is continuing.

In public comments, business owner Anne Hart asked if there were plans to increase the number of members on the Downtown Development Authority. Graziano said additional members are "definitely welcome," but the village had previously had trouble finding more people.

I was always fascinated by politics, and I was exposed to it quite a lot.
— J.B. Pritzker

Chikaming Township Board updated on broadband expansion

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

Broadband expansion is moving along in Chikaming Township, members of the township board learned at their Thursday, Feb. 13, meeting.

Supervisor David Bunte said that Midwest Energy and Communications (MEC) has begun dropping fiber optic cable installations throughout the eastern portion of the township, which is around the areas of Weechik, Kaiser and Flynn roads and Indian Trail.

He said that MEC is scheduled to complete the installations in the first quarter of 2025 and then hookups will begin and be completed in the second one.

In the second quarter, fiber will be installed in the southern portion of the township, which will be inclusive of Three Oaks and Weesaw townships, with hookups and installation completed in the third quarter of 2025.

"This is for properties primarily unserviced or had no service for broadband connections in our rural areas," Bunte said.

In 2023, MEC was awarded a Realizing Opportunity with Broadband Infrastructure Networks (ROBIN) Grant for broadband expansion in the county, with the township committing $200,000 of its American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to the project.

Another opportunity for broadband expansion is coming up for pockets in the township that aren't currently serviced and that weren't covered by the first ROBIN grant through the federal Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment (BEAD) Grant.

"So, the second grant funding that the board will eventually will come to with a proposal from the county will probably be serviced by ISP providers already near those locations," Bunte said.

He added that properties that are already serviced by was a provider were "not inclusive of this grant expansion."

Board members heard an update on the ongoing AEP Transmission Line Project.

Bunte said that several residents are getting notices, letters and information from AEP with regards to their own personal property and the "impact that this transmission line replacement project is going to have."

He encourages anyone who's involved in the project, "specifically on a personal level," to ensure 100 percent certainty on the location of their pole and what it'll look like as well as what trees will be removed and the compensation for those trees.

The township has received documents, with the final one being received that day on tree removal at the cemetery and other locations on Three Oaks Road.

Bunte said the documents will be reviewed by the township's attorney before any decisions are made, with a review of all the information at the March meeting.

Bunte said that the project may now begin in early or in the spring of 2026.

Officer Justin Hageman displays his lifesaving award with Kaitlynn Coy and police chief Todd Taylor

Chikaming Township Police Officer Justin Hageman was presented with a Life Saving Award from police chief Todd Taylor.

Last month, Taylor said that "in a remarkable display of quick thinking," Hageman's response "proved lifesaving" during an incident where Kaitlynn Coy, an eighth grader at River Valley, began choking.

"His proper application of emergency techniques successfully dislodged the obstruction, allowing the student to breathe freely again," Taylor said.

Board members approved collecting 100 percent of summer taxes from River Valley, Berrien RESA and Lake Michigan College and collecting 50 percent of summer taxes and 50 percent of winter taxes from New Buffalo Area Schools.

Board members adopted a resolution to apply for a Lowes Hometowns Grant, which requires no match, for the Kohn Park Project.

The first 2025 Berrien County Road Department agreement was approved for roadwork that will encompass Townline Acres Subdivision for $79,791, with the township's share being $39,895.50

An updated, two-year SafeBuilt Services agreement was approved.

Board members approved the township entering into a fleet management leasing agreement with Enterprise.

Bunte said that the township is looking to slowly replace its fleet with leased vehicles to "minimize the financial impact on an annual basis of full car replacement when it comes to our fleet."

To test out the program, the township will begin leasing two fire department trucks and one police vehicle, which were going to be replaced this year in the 2025 budget.

Board members acknowledged grants from The Pokagon Fund and Heart of Cook to allow the purchase of two thermal engine camera replacements for the fire department.

Board members approved Bunte signing a hold harmless agreement with Berrien Springs/Berrien County Firefighters Training Committee to donate the township's outdated air packs to the Berrien Springs High School CTE program.

The 2025 Standard Allowable Millage Rate, which has been increased 70 cents per mile, was approved.

Board members adopted board salary adjustments for 2024-2025.

A resident inquired about the series of water main breaks within the last few weeks. Bunte said that the freeze/thaw cycle has been the "biggest contributor," along with aging infrastructure. The township is working with engineers to put a capital improvement plan together for the sewer and water systems to "start strategically looking at replacement over the long term."

City approves Escrow Fund Account, discusses grant for Oselka Park

BY THERESE DONNELLY

In a step aimed at reducing costs to city residents, the New Buffalo City Council voted at their Feb. 18 meeting to approve an Escrow Fund Account and policy.

City Manager Darwin Watson explained that currently, when a private development project is proposed, the city incurs costs associated with reviewing the plans, consulting with a city engineer and preparing documents for review. By establishing an escrow for the developers, he said, the cost would be removed from taxpayers.

The council also approved a fee adjustment to increase Special Use Permit applications, in order to take the burden of associated costs off the taxpayers. Watson told the council the current permit fees are $350 for "regular" permits and $500 for multi-family or commercial permits. This money is used to cover staff reviews, public notifications and other administrative costs the city takes on before approving an application. On Watson's recommendation, the council voted to increase the fees to $600 and $750, respectively, effective Feb. 19, 2025.

The city's application for a grant through the Michigan Department of Natural Resources for improvements at Oselka Park has resulted in a $150,000 grant, with the condition the city come up with a local match of $120,000. Watson said the improvement project includes work on dugouts, bleachers and pathways at Field 3, which is used for softball games, as well as installation of solar lights, native landscaping and trash and recycling receptacles. Watson further stated the field has drainage issues that were not covered by the grant, but are necessary for the work to begin.

Watson recommended the council requests a municipal allocation from the Pokagon Fund in an amount not to exceed $150,000 towards the project. Before voting, the council asked how funding is shared among the Recreation Authority, which is made of the city, New Buffalo Township and New Buffalo Area Schools. Watson said he had recently met with NBAS Superintendent Adam Bowen and they are working on identifying how to break down responsibilities. He said the $150,000 request would be the maximum amount the city would need to contribute.

The council approved the recommendation.

The Annual Tour de Shore bike ride is set for June 14, 2025. The 100-mile bike ride benefit begins in Chicago and ends in New Buffalo.

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The council approved a special event application for participants to use Oselka Park Pavilion on June 14 from 10a.m. to 4p.m.

Medic 1 ambulance service has proposed a restated articles of incorporation for the entity that provides emergency medical services to New Buffalo. Watson said the new document for Community Emergency Service (CES) was in the best interest of the community and for CES. The council voted to adopt the restated articles of incorporation as proposed.

In an effort to simplify the administrative process, the council approved a license agreement with Service 1 Marine to use the city boat launch and transient marina to launch and remove boats between March 1 and Dec. 1 at a cost of $20 per boat. The old system had Service 1 submit a check every time it used the facilities. Under the new agreement, there will be a flat fee paid twice during the season.

The transient marina building's roof is in need of replacement. Watson told the council the current roof is original to the building, which was constructed in the 1990s. IBM Construction has the contract to replace the roofs at the beach concession and boat launch and Watson said city staff have recommended using the same firm on the marina roof to maintain consistency. The council approved IBM's bid of $25,800

The council also approved a bid from Versaw Earthworks Excavating and Trucking to repair the lateral sewer line at City Hall. Watson said the line has recently failed, which is affecting facilities at the building, particularly the police department.

The $20,500 bid will include line repair, and fixing the asphalt and sidewalks affected by the work.

On the recommendation of the Planning Commission, the council approved a site plan for a single-family residence at 315 S Clinton Street. The Commission approved the plan presented by property owner Michael Bily at their Feb, 4 meeting and recommended the City Council give conditional approval, pending a review of access.

After completing their new business, the council heard an appeal from property owner Ian Grzywacz regarding sidewalk requirements at his property on 204 W Clay Street. Grzywacz recently put an addition on the residence and city ordinance requires owners putting in new construction or an addition which is more than 30 percent of the original building size add sidewalks in the city easement.

In his appeal, Grzywacz said he had applied for his permits in May but was out of the house from July to December and did not receive the letter from the city informing him of the requirement. He said he was not prepared to take on the unexpected expense.

The city ordinance does allow owners to appeal the requirement due to issues with topography, unusual expense or other difficulties. Grzywacz said along with the expense, installing sidewalks would require the removal of several trees. He also said he had seen several other construction sites that had not been required to add sidewalks.

Mayor Vance Price noted it is the builders' responsibility to know and follow building codes.

Councilmember Rich Knoll sympathized with Grzywacz, saying, "I feel sick that you did your addition and this got thrown out of the loop at some point."

However, the council voted to deny the appeal.

Prior to adjournment, Price recognized the city volunteer fire department, including Paul Zdanis, who has served for 40 years.

Township board hears marijuana dispensaries concerns

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

Adult-use marijuana establishments took center stage at the New Buffalo Township Board's Tuesday, Feb. 18, meeting.

During public comments, Jerry Looney, who owns property on Grand Avenue, said that he recently sold a purchase agreement to someone regarding the opening of a potential marijuana dispensary.

The person kept asking for extensions until, after nine months, Looney told him he "can't give you any more extensions."

He found out that, the way the ordinance is written, a preliminary special land use (SLU) doesn't go with the property.

"What I'm asking you to do now is to try to redo the ordinance, so I'm not held hostage by the purchaser – basically, with the moratorium coming on, you weaponized the guy purchasing the property where he had leverage over me," Looney said.

He added that his property is in the marijuana overlay and that the plans have been submitted and everything has been approved; however, he doesn't have a preliminary SLU and "can't get it with the way things are today" because of the township's marijuana moratorium.

"All I'm asking is give me chance to play competitively with the people that are buying against the people that are selling," Looney said.

Attorney Mark Donnelly said that they're not asking for new applications but for ones "that have already been submitted and partially approved to be allowed to be taken to completion."

"I think what Jerry is asking what would be fair to allow those that have already been submitted and already been considered to allow to be transferred back to the landowner to allow the landowner to move forward," he said.

Jeremy Kreuger, who has property on Exit 4 on U.S. 12, said he's granted "multiple extensions" to someone.

A closing on the property that was scheduled to occur that day didn't happen "because they renegotiated, three weeks ago they started wanting to renegotiate, and it doesn't work that way."

"So now they have the SLU, I don't have it, the contract is done - so I have to start over from scratch," he said.

As a youth and future voter, Chase Churchill said he's concerned about the "noticeable increase in littering around our community, especially our roadway with the opening of dispensaries over the last year."

He and his family spent several hours filling large contractor bags of trash, including dispensary packaging, wrappers and fast-food packaging.

Churchill suggested installing signage near dispensaries and along major roads warning about littering and listing penalties for doing so; working with dispensaries, fast food restaurants and other local businesses to "encourage customers to dispose of waste responsibly" and community campaigns.

Board members approved an outdoor assembly permit for Urb Cannabis for April 19, which is the day before the 4/20 cannabis holiday, from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., as well as adopted a resolution that states that marijuana establishments will be allowed to open at 7 a.m. Sunday, April 20.

Noting that 4/20 fell on Easter Sunday this year, trustee Howard Males asked if there's any way the township can "encourage" the dispensaries to "let us know they have plans for the movement of traffic in and out" on that day.

He added that the dispensaries "came here asking the township to grant them more spaces," although he doesn't believe they have those spaces put in yet.

New Buffalo Township Supervisor Michelle Heit said that allowing the dispensaries to open at 7 a.m. will "get some of that chaos out of the way early," adding that people were camped out and lined up around the dispensaries before they opened at 9 a.m. last year.

She added that the township will have an extra deputy working that day.

Having more dispensaries open this year may spread more of the traffic out, Heit said.

Board members approved the following step increases, effective March 3: a 1 percent step increase to utility billing clerk Julie Monahan and a 2 percent step increase to the annual salary for utility superintendent Alex Keen.

A resolution that adopts the restated Article of Incorporation for Medic One Ambulance Service was adopted.

An agreement with the Berrien County Road Department for roadwork on Maudlin, Hoder, Farina, Kinst, Sand, Stromer and Old M60 for a total amount of $348,088.63, with payment of 50 percent up front, was approved.

Board members granted a six-month extension of a preliminary approval of an SLU to AUM Investments LLC at 18350 U.S. 12 until Sept. 5, 2025.

The third pay estimate for $225,785.75 to PayJay, Inc. for the U.S. 12 water and sewer project was approved.

Lakeside Woods property to become COL preserve

Chikaming Open Lands (COL) celebrated the New Year with the acquisition of a new nature preserve in Chikaming Township Dec. 31, 2024.

The 16-acre property is located on Lakeside Road, just north of Warren Woods Road, in close proximity to COL's Edward and Elizabeth Leonard Wildlife Preserve. The acquisition will permanently protect valuable forest, wetlands, wildlife habitat, and open space in the Lakeside community. The new property will be named Lakeside Woods Preserve and will be open to the public for passive recreation and educational opportunities.

The preservation of the land came to fruition through the efforts of a local community group, Lakeside Neighbors Against Development, Inc (LAND), working with COL. When plans to create a new residential subdivision were proposed in 2023, neighbors joined forces in order to preserve the property and its desirable forest and wetlands. LAND engaged the developer to reach an agreement to purchase the property, acting as the intermediary owner in order to transfer the property to COL for permanent protection. With support from the community, LAND secured the funding to purchase the property from the developer, which included a generous donation from an anonymous benefactor to COL to complete the acquisition from LAND.

"COL greatly appreciates the contributions of LAND, the anonymous donor, and the neighbors and friends who supported the effort for this outstanding addition to our portfolio of protected properties – truly a win-win, achieving LAND's goal of averting development of the property in a manner they believed was inconsistent with the character of the neighborhood, while simultaneously achieving COL's goals to preserve ecologically valuable properties," COL President Rick Spain said in a press release.

A management plan will be developed by COL in 2025 to create goals to preserve the natural resources and designate the recreational and educational uses of the property. COL expects to provide nonmotorized, pedestrian access from Lakeside Road and create a natural surface loop trail through the property along with installation of trail signage and markers.

Chikaming Open Lands is the local land conservancy dedicated to preserving open space and the diverse natural character of southern Berrien County. COL permanently protects and preserves the natural habitats, working farms, water resources, and scenic lands that make this area unique. Since its founding in 1999, COL has been instrumental in protecting and preserving more than 2,300 acres.

Lakeside Neighbors Against Development, Inc. is a local community organization in Chikaming Township formed to preserve green spaces and encourage sustainable development in our lakeside communities. — STAFF REPORTS

Two players from La Lumiere chosen as McDonald's All-Americans

BY STAN MADDUX

Two members of the boys' national basketball team at La Lumiere School were chosen as McDonald's All-Americans this season.

The last time La Lumiere had two players from the same team selected to play in the much coveted games was 2017 when the Lakers brought home a national championship.

Darius Adams and Jalen Haralson were among the 24 players chosen as McDonald's All Americans from over 800 nominees from across the country.

"It's just nice to see all of their hard work get recognized on the national scene," said Head Coach Pat Holmes.

Adams, a 6'5" forward, is averaging 17 points a game while Haralson, a 6'7" forward, has a 15 point scoring average per game.

Adams is committed to play next season at the University of Connecticut.

Haralson signed to play at the University of Notre Dame.

Both are members of the East squad, which is scheduled to play in the McDonald's All-American game against the West team on April 1 in Brooklyn, New York.

The Lakers (18-11) are at risk of not receiving an invitation to the Chipotle National Finals for the second consecutive season.

Holmes said the only way his team to receive one of the eight bids is to win their Nike Elite conference tournament in Augusta, Georgia during the first weekend in March.

"We have our work cut out for us," he said.

So far, the Lakers have won just two of their nine conference games.

For whatever reason, Holmes said the team has not quite lived up to his pre-season expectations.

"You'd think with all of the seniors we have that we'd be in a better position but we just haven't been able to put it together," he said.

Jaren Jackson, Jr. and Brian Bowen, II, were the last Lakers from the same class chosen as McDonald's All-Americans.

Jackson is now playing for the Memphis Grizzlies in the NBA while Bowen is with the Stockton Kings in the NBA's G League.

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FAMILY FIRE is a shooting involving an improperly stored gun, often found in the home.
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SPORTS

From the Bleachers

COLUMN BY KURT MARGGRAF IN CHICAGO

Here we go again.

While big market teams are signing all of the big name free agents, the Cubs are sitting idly by, twiddling their thumbs, hoping they'll catch a break and someone will want to play in Chicago so badly that they'll sign with them for bargain basement prices.

I want to believe that if I were a player, I would sign a contract with the team I liked the best in the city I liked the most, for a measly 120 million over 4 years instead of holding out for 120 million over three years.

While I must admit that I've never been faced with this dilemma, I'm pretty darn sure I would give my favorite team a discount. I want to blame this greed on the agents, but when I think about it, the players are the ones hiring them, and the owners are the ones who are paying them. And, when you get right down to it, fans are the ones supporting it.

A lot of the trouble Chicago teams are facing is due to the fact that Chicago's owners aren't spending money like drunken sailors. Just like many politicians, when a new source of revenue is found, two new ways to spend it are discovered.

Now you may believe that my rant had to do with the Cubs inability to sign free agent Alex Bregman. While that was the inspiration, I actually am very glad that Bregman signed with the Red Sox. The Cubs have a hot shot rookie and a really solid second baseman.

Had the Cubs signed Bregman, the prevailing thought was that they would probably trade their solid second baseman, Niko Horner.

That would have necessitated moving the hot shot rookie, Matt Shaw, to second base. The net result would have been to pay Bregman 30 million dollars and trade Horner who is making about 13 million and have Shaw move from third base to second.

In my opinion, the extra seventeen million in payroll for a player who may hit 10 more homers, but otherwise is basically equal is a waste of resources. Why not let the rookie play and find out how good he can be, keep Hoerner, and with the 17 million in savings, acquire a premier closer.

The Cubs have made moves to strengthen their bullpen but they sure could use a shutdown closer if they hope to make the playoffs. I'm all for getting as many good players as possible on your team but building your team with free agents is a losing battle unless you're willing to spend an awful lot of money.

The Cubs aren't willing, so they have to develop some of their own minor leaguers and then give them the opportunity to play. The rapidly approaching season will begin to tell who's approach was correct.

I can't wait for the season to begin.

Audrey Hepburn said, "As you grow older, you will discover that you have two hands, one for helping yourself, the other for helping others."

Be kind. Talk to you next week. Peace, love, and happiness.

Do or not do. There is no try. — *Yoda*

Cole Dillard

Ezra Kirtdoll

New Buffalo, Niles youth named district champions in Free Throw Championship

Five boys and girls from Niles and New Buffalo, ages 9 to 13, were named District Champions of the 2025 Knights of Columbus Free Throw Championship and have earned the right to compete at the Diocesan level.

Fr. Allouez Council 708 in Niles, MI sponsored the local competition at St. Mary's School Gym. The winners from each council championship in the district were eligible to participate.

The 9-year-old champion was Ezra Kirtdoll from Niles in the boys' bracket. Cole Dillard from Niles was the winner of the 10-year-old boys' division. In the 11-year-old bracket, Sophia Pontius from Niles was the girls' champion. The 12-year-old winner in the girls' division was Annabelle Gross from New Buffalo and the 13-year-old boys' division was won by Justus Rowland from New Buffalo.

Each of these winners will compete in the Diocescan competition to be held at 1 p.m. Sunday, March 9, at St. Catherine of Siena Church, Stanley Center Gym, 1150 W. Center Avenue in Portage, Michigan, with an eye toward moving on to the state level.

Council 14366 in New Buffalo, and Council 708 in Niles are 2 of 16,000 Knights of Columbus councils that make up the world's largest Catholic fraternal service organization. Founded in 1882 to assist working-class and immigrant Catholics in the United States, today the approximately two million members of the Knights put their faith into action through a broad range of charitable causes locally, nationally and internationally with financial contributions and hands-on service.

— STAFF REPORTS

]Sophia Pontius

Annabelle Gross

World Travel Club hosting giveback dinners for Italy trip

The New Buffalo High School World Travel Club is making it possible for students to expand their horizons through an exciting international trip to Italy.

Thanks to the support of the school district and many local businesses, 17 students and two adult sponsors are making the trip this June. The club, advised by Kurt Raducha and Leanne Lamport, aims to provide students with the affordable opportunity to learn about the world firsthand.

To make these trips more accessible for all students, the World Travel Club has partnered with several local restaurants to host "Give Back Nights." These events involve a local restaurant generously donating a portion of the proceeds on a given day to the club.

Villa Nova Pizzeria was the first business to host a successful Give Back Night Jan. 29. Many community members came out to show their support. Other local businesses have committed to hosting Give Back Nights in the next few months. These include PostBoy, which was Feb. 5; Hummingbird Lounge, which was Feb. 19 and Roma Pizza, which is March 12. Brewster's is also set to host an upcoming date to be determined in April, with other restaurants offering to partner in the future.

The World Travel Club wishes to thank the incredible local businesses and community members for their support. It has helped to not only raise money but also raise awareness about the WTC. To learn more about their travels or how to become a sponsor, please contact Kurt Raducha at kraducha@nbas.org.

— STAFF REPORTS

Bees too much for Bison

BY STAN MADDUX

For a while, the New Buffalo High School boys' basketball team exchanged leads with their rivals from Bridgman but the Bees just had too much sting for the Bison.

New Buffalo down by seven points at halftime wound up losing 66-44 at home Tuesday, Feb. 18, during senior night.

Head Coach Nate Tripp said he was pleased with how his players competed against one of the best teams in the region.

"It's okay. Our guys played really well," he said.

The Bison scored five of the first eight points on a short bucket while driving to the rim from M'Nason Smothers and a nothing but net three point shot by Keyon Tomilo.

James Shaw later sank a five-foot bank shot just before nailing a three-point bucket.

Gradually, Bridgman opened up a four-point lead but the Bison took the lead toward the end of the first quarter on a three-point shot from Sam Tripp followed by a bucket and free throw from Brysun Perry.

The Bees, though, quickly opened a nine-point lead in the second quarter.

The Bison, though, pulled to within five points on buckets close to the rim from Lucas Forker and Trevor James before halftime.

The consistently good shooting from all over the court from Bridgman allowed the Bees to extend their lead to 13 points during the third quarter and lock up the victory early in the final period.

The loss came after the Bison cruised to victories over Countryside Academy, Howardsville Christian and Our Lady of the Lake Catholic School.

New Buffalo (13-8) will play their last regular season game at River Valley Friday, Feb. 21, and then open up the District 4 tournament Wednesday, Feb. 26, at Our Lady of the Lake in St. Joseph.

Tripp is hoping for a deep post season run.

"We're ready. We're playing much better basketball now. We're hitting it at the right time," he said.

HIKERS PLAN TRIP TO BENDIX WOODS ON MARCH 1

Bendix Woods County Park in New Carlisle, Indiana, will be the site of an upcoming hike Saturday, March 1.

Among the highlights of the hike, which will be presented by Harbor Country Hikers, will be a visit to the park's sugar bush (a stand of sugar maples) and a look at how maple syrup is made from the sap of those trees. Hannah Branchick, an interpretive naturalist with the county and overseer of the maple sugaring operation, will lead the hike.

The hike will also include some of the featured environments of Bendix Woods, such as a 27-acre nature preserve with wooded trails, ponds, prairies and open space. Rated moderately physically difficult, the hike gets underway at 1 p.m. Eastern in one of the park's shelters or in its parking lot, depending on the weather.

Though membership is preferred, all are welcome to explore Bendix Woods with the Hikers, and there is no charge to attend. For driving directions and advice on what to wear, visit harborcountryhikers.com or the group's Facebook page. — STAFF REPORTS

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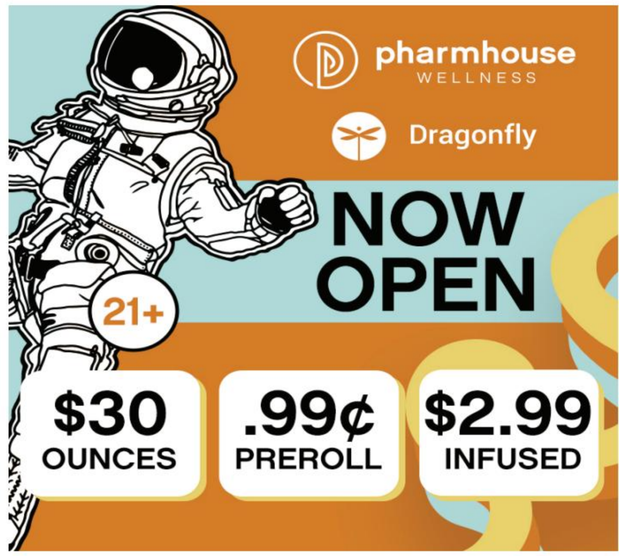


Warm hearts fill empty bowls at 'Empty Bowls' fundraiser

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

Guests at New Buffalo Middle/High School's cafeteria could purchase a handmade ceramic bowl and enjoy a warm meal of soup or chili on a cold winter's night, while helping local students, during this year's Empty Bowls fundraiser Tuesday, Feb. 18.

The event was hosted by the high school's student senate, along with Renee Bowen's Foods and Nutrition class and Ashley Jager's Pottery Club. A suggested $10 donation provided guests with a meal and a bowl, with proceeds going toward New Buffalo Elementary School's Blessings in a Backpack program to help students in needs.

Members of the student senate serve up soup and chili

Lisa Werner, Denise Churchill and Vannessa Thun enjoy soup

Art teacher Ashley Jager helps guests choose the bowls

Co-Mr. New Buffalo Kayden Hall and Miss New Buffalo Ellen Ripley welcome guests to the dinner

Student senate members serve guests soup and chili

Art teacher Ashley Jager and Han Tannehill stand by the display of bowls

Handmade ceramic bowls are on display

HOROSCOPE

FEBRUARY 20-26, 2025

AS INTERPRETED BY SANDY "STAR" BENDT

ARIES MARCH 21—APRIL 19

This week the energy coming your way is a bit testy. Therefore, it's important that your actions and words match. Don't let yourself down or compromise what you know is right to keep things hidden or to not involve difficult emotions. Act with integrity.

TAURUS APRIL 20—MAY 20

Friends and social groups may call into question which and what values or morals you think are important. Be aware that you may be pulled into conversations that could push your buttons or make some of your more private issues public. Speak and react slowly and thoughtfully.

GEMINI MAY 21—JUNE 21

The real test for you this week is controlling yourself and having dominance over your own reactions. It will be easy to get caught up in power struggles and over indulgences now. It's important to really check yourself before you do things. Practice self-restraint in all instances now.

CANCER JUNE 22—JULY 22

This week you are being called to come out of you shell and make an appearance. It's time to move out and about in the world. Show off your abilities. Seek out new opportunities and look for new developments to get involved with. Gather your seeds because the place to plant is coming.

LEO JULY 23—AUGUST 22

There is a lot of outside scrutiny or pressure to respond in certain ways this week. It is important to contribute and be part of a team but this is not the time to over extend or promise too much. Be cautious when getting involved and be prepared for critical analysis of your actions.

VIRGO AUGUST 23—SEPTEMBER 22

Your sense of control or positioning within a relationship or social dynamic could be tested this week. Know that you are being called upon to uphold your perspective while needing to incorporate another's perspective at the same time. Understand that cooperation is essential now. Work it out.

LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23—OCTOBER 22

Your work ethic and moral compass may be questioned or tested this week. Therefore, it is important to really gage your audience as you communicate ideas. Avoid using slang or ambiguous terms. Be clear and concise with people when explaining things or giving directives.

SCORPIO OCTOBER 23—NOVEMBER 21

There is a very deep connection possible now. This is the time to express yourself. Set your heart on something and know you can make it happen. Understand the people who are committed to you will not just push you to do and be better but will actively participate in your advancement.

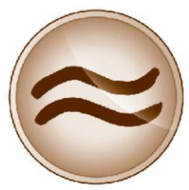
SAGITTARIUS NOVEMBER 22—DECEMBER 21

The integrity and strength of your relationship or family may feel tested this week. You may need to give more emotional help or be asked how you feel about controversial topics. Be aware that any response or action on your part may be criticized or scrutinized. Think before you act.

CAPRICORN DECEMBER 22—JANUARY 19

There is going to be an acceleration in your dealings with others this week. This is the time to prove what you know and be upfront with your skills. Don't hold back. Trust in your abilities and be of assistance when and where you can. Good connections come from impromptu meetings now.

AQUARIUS JANUARY 20—FEBRUARY 18



Your ability to stay on target and focused on your goals could prove difficult now. Whether it is your power of concentration or the value of pursuing something know that this is a test and that circumstances are pushing you to see who and what truly will take precedence in your life.

PISCES FEBRUARY 19—MARCH 20

Family matters will take center stage this week. Whether it is taking care of others or taking time to nurture and mother yourself, it's time to put emotional and spiritual needs first. Pull back from hectic work and social schedules. Prioritize creative and meditative practices now.

The key is to keep company only with people who uplift you, whose presence calls forth your best. — Epictetus

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Sudoku

Fill in the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9.

		1					4	
8	2		5	9		7	1	
			8	1		5		9
5			1					
	7		3			1	2	
2				8				
	9	3		5		2		
	8							
					7			

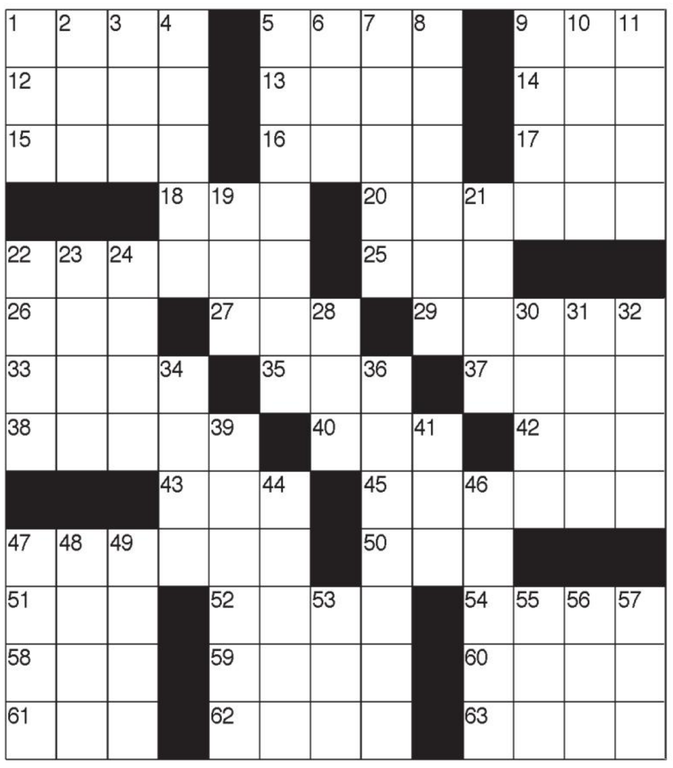
CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS

1 Pork (Fr.)
5 Larva
9 Antiballistic Missile (abbr.)
12 Scientific name (suf.)
13 Harangue
14 Mine (Sp.)
15 Boat
16 Border
17 Haw. garland
18 Tattle
20 Gila
22 Pac. island
25 "Fables in Slang" author
26 Soul or spirit (Fr.)
27 Sayings (suf.)
29 Auricular
33 Antenna
35 Give (Scot.)
37 Latite
38 Indian tea
40 No middle initial (abbr.)
42 Shipshaped clock
43 River rapids
45 Dark volcanic rock
47 Group of fish
50 Malt liquor
51 Antiaircraft artillery (abbr.)
52 Ananias
54 Post
58 Bikini top
59 Amalekite king
60 Assuage
61 Decrease
62 Whole (pref.)
63 Freedman in Kentish law

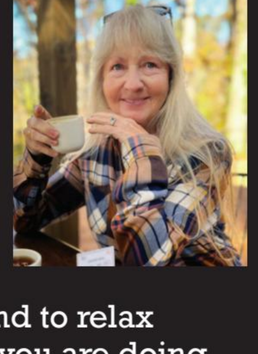
DOWN

1 Aunt (Sp.)
2 Mother of Hezekia
3 Top
4 Irish exclamation
5 Presa (2 words)
6 P.I. volcano
7 Emerge
8 Yearly church payment
9 Pressure
10 And
11 Birth a lamb
19 Stinging insect
21 Indiana (abbr.)
22 Trolley
23 Daughter of Zeus
24 Insert (2 words)
26 Rom. box
30 Colza
32 Berne's river
33 Roast
36 Noun-forming (suf.)
39 Guido's note (2 words)
43 Almost
46 Grape disease
47 Christmas (abbr.)
48 Gaming cubes
50 Ship of the Argonauts
53 Fluidity unit
55 Amer. Automobile Assn. (abbr.)
56 Ultimate degree
57 To (Scot.)



To Your Health

COLUMN BY KAREN EDWARDS ND



RELIEVING STRESS

There are so many reasons that we could live in fear, anger, frustration, grief and resentment. In doing so, all of this creates a physiological stress response releasing adrenaline and cortisol. These are fight or flight hormones that create weight gain, (or loss for some) headaches,rapid aging, memory loss, digestive and sleep disorders, neurological malfunctions, heart palpitations, weakened immunity, and many more negative health symptoms. The more we dwell on a negative situation, the more it magnifies it.

We have to each make a decision of what we are going to entertain in our minds to stay out of the flight or fight mode, to relax and calm our minds.

Being in nature can improve mental health, reduce stress, and promote healing. Science has proven that even Looking at photos of nature can release the same feel-good hormones. Take a walk in the snow. It is so rejuvenating.

Pet an animal. Even if you don't have one, visit someone that does. The animal will love it and it will release serotonin and endorphins in you. The good happy hormones.

Listen to your favorite relaxing music. This too can release good hormones in your body allowing your nervous system to calm and relax. Read a book. Write a gratitude journal.

Exercise. Do some yoga or tai-chi. Maybe some chair exercises or rebounding. Deep Breathing is also a great way to relieve stress.

Take a news and social media vacation. It seems like so much of the negative comes from the news. Clicking the off button can help reset our stress hormones and bring us back to center. Doing crafts that you enjoy is a great way to relieve stress, and allow your mind to relax and unwind. Plus, you are doing something productive.

Getting enough sleep and eating a healthy diet full of fruits and vegetables can also help your body relieve stress. Eating processed foods laden with sugar will do the opposite. Eating too much sugar can contribute to stress by causing blood sugar spikes and crashes, leading to mood swings, anxiety, and increased cortisol production (the body's primary stress hormone.)

Laughing releases so many healthy hormones. We have to create our own environment to make joy happen.

Spending a morning at your local Library is a great stress reducer. A library can help relieve stress by providing a quiet, safe space to relax and reflect. They offer a vast collection of books and resources on any topic that interests you, including stress management.

We need to pick our battles so we can live healthy and happy. It doesn't change things we cannot change, but it does help us cope with our own state of mind.

Write down some of your favorite stress relieving activities and work off the list when you are feeling tense anduneasy.

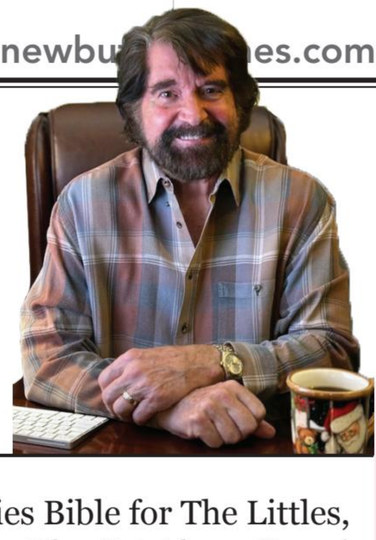
Disclaimer: Nothing in these articles is meant to replace medical advice. If you are on medications, do not stop taking them. This is for educational purposes.

Karen Edwards is a board-Certified Dr. of Naturopathy, Master Herbalist, Vegan and Raw food Chef. She is owner of Holistic Alternatives in New Buffalo and La Porte for over 25 years.

A Writer's Life...

DURING THE GOLDEN AGE OF TELEVISION ANIMATION

BY JACK OLESKER



Gold!

I hurry back to my leased condo, open the manilla envelope and take out the thick Series Bible for The Get Along Gang. I split my attention into two directions – one to learn about this adorable series with adorable creaturesliving in Green Meadow; the other to study the Series Bible as Andy had instructed, "to learn how a series bible is written and why it's written a certain way."

Jean, Andy and Lori are razor sharp execs with finely honed antennae. I am sure their antennae can discern when a writer has potential and can be of benefit to them. I am convinced they are grooming me for something beyond The Get Along Gang. I just don't know what it is...yet

Other things don't make sense: Jean giving a novelist a shot at writing for television; teaching me where I am making mistakes and how to correct them; Andy taking me to see The Great and Powerful Wizardess of CBS, Judy Price after I'd written a couple of scripts for a show CBS wasn't even broadcasting!

But the thing that most doesn't make sense is why Iam pulled off The Littles to write just one episode of The Get Along Gang.

It might not make sense yet, but I am willing to bet Jean, Andy and Lori haven't gone to all this effort just to have me write a handful of television episodes.

I accept I'll figure it all out in good time and, anyway, I love a good mystery. In the meantime I dive into reading the Series Bible for The Get Along Gang.

It's Gold!

I have two gears. When I get excited about something it's "Elevator going up'!" But when I get deflated, it turns 'Elevator going down'...". For the moment I'm going up.

As with the Series Bible for The Littles, the Series Bible for The Get Along Gang is amazing, all the more so because I'm more experienced now and know how to study a series bible.

There are lengthy sections about the series' Backstory, Concept, Characters, Locations, Format and Story Springboards. Skillfully written, it creates the entire world of the series. I am in awe.

But as dusk falls, my elation wanes and I am stuck in an elevator "going down", reflecting how pompous I am to think Jean, Andy and Lori are strategizing about how Jack Olesker, having written a whole three episodes of The Littles, is going to play a vital role in the studio's growth. Jeffrey Scott is Jean's go-to writer. Jean said I'm not even allowed to say his name. I drive to the studio, go to Lori's office and ask to see everything Jeffrey had written. She starts pulling out script after script after script, piling them up in a tower on her desk. "At last count, 136 episodes of produced television. Let me know when you want me to stop..."

My elevator car hits rock bottom. At best I'm a minor cog in DIC's machine.

Lori softens. "Don't be so hard on yourself. You're just starting out. Go home and get to work on The Get Along Gang."

I slink out of Lori's office, tail firmly tucked between my legs, and withdraw to do as she has instructed. Me, with the "golden fingers". Yeah...right...

Jack Olesker's career in the entertainment industry spans over four decades. He has served as a story editor in L.A. as well as president of a motion picture and television company in Chennai, India. His writing ranges from Mighty Morphin Power Rangers, Care Bears and Hello Kitty's Furry Tale Theater to documentaries and horror novels and murder mysteries for adults.

Large returning from Michigan pot bust

Charges have been filed against two men allegedly caught in Indiana with a trunk load of marijuana and THC products while returning from Michigan.

Luis Diaz and Cade McConnaha are each charged with Level 5 felony dealing in marijuana and Level 6 felony possession of marijuana.

According to court documents, the investigation shows the Iowa men on Feb. 4 were returning home from Detroit when stopped on Interstate 94 outside Michigan City for a traffic violation.

Police said both men appeared extremely nervous before evidence developed to allow for a search of the vehicle.

There were 13 pounds of marijuana, more than 1,100 THC vape pen cartridges, four pounds of THC wax along with 17 ounces of THC edibles and six boxes of THC syrup that were found inside two large trash bags and suitcase in the trunk of the vehicle, according to court documents.

Police said one of the bags also contained an undisclosed amount of cash in stacks held together by rubber bands.

At least some of the marijuana was purchased legally in Michigan from a dispensary, police said.

Both men could each face an up to six year prison term on the most serious felony count.

Initially, they were being held in the La Porte County Jail on $15,000 cash only bond. — **STAN MADDUX**

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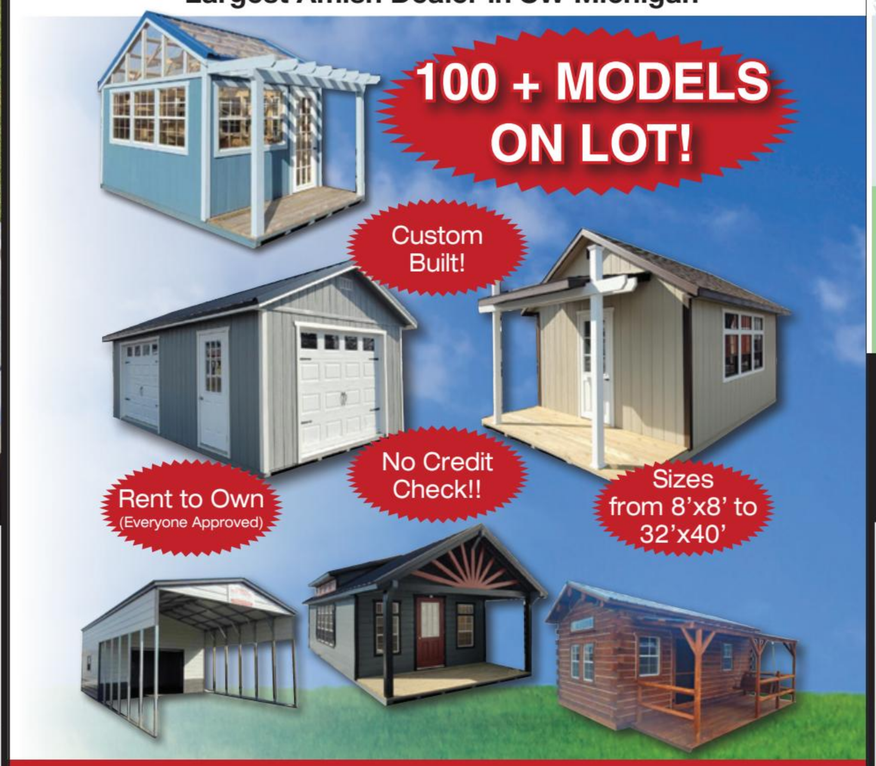

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Michigan City opposes marijuana dispensary advertising

BY STAN MADDUX

Michigan City officials have come out in support of a proposed ban on marijuana dispensary advertising in Indiana, where the drug remains illegal.

Without opposition, the city council Tuesday, Feb. 18, adopted a resolution in favor of a proposal to ban all forms of marijuana dispensary advertising in the state and another measure that would restrict the location of billboards promoting such products.

Councilman Don Przybylinski said copies of the resolution will be sent to every Indiana state senator and lawmakers serving on committees that might consider the proposals in the house and senate.

Przybylinski frowned upon the several billboards in Michigan City advertising dispensaries within a short drive outside New Buffalo, Michigan.

He said children, especially, "should not be exposed to such advertising in their home environments."

Michigan City resident Scott Mellon said he understands both sides of the issue but the measures at the statehouse, if adopted, would be an example of government overreach and possibly challenged in the courts based on freedom of speech laws protected in the U.S. Constitution.

"We can't protect kids from the world. You think kids don't know what's available across the border? They know," he said.

Another resident, Tommy Kulavik, supported the city council's decision, saying marijuana is still classified by the federal government as a controlled substance.

"I'm kind of getting sick and tired of getting all of their marketing material and advertising letters in my mail box," he said.

Councilwoman Daisy Lee, a public-school teacher, said marijuana dispensary advertising seems to "normalize" the use of illegal products in the state and encourage their use particularly among children.

"When these things are advertised constantly, it makes it more o.k. for the kids to have access to it," she said.

Under House Bill 1026, billboards advertising marijuana would not be allowed within 1,000 feet of a school bus route, playground and other places commonly frequented by children.

That measure is before the House Committee on Commerce and Technology.

Senate Bill 166 banning all forms of marijuana dispensary advertising has been referred to the Senate's Judiciary Committee.

So far, no hearings have been scheduled to consider any of the proposals.

PET OF THE WEEK

JAKE

Jake is a goofy ham that loves to snuggle. He is a German Shepherd, almost 10 months old, and is neutered with his vaccinations up-to-date. Jake is short an stocky at about 55 pounds, and has the best body wiggles. He is receptive to older children, but takes time with other dogs. Jake wants to play and wants an active lifestyle, if only to let his his fantastic ears fly. Jake has high intelligence, and wants to greet anyone he can. He knows the basic commands of sitting, and loves his treats. He might just be your next best friend.

AVAILABLE AT THE MICHIANA HUMANE SOCIETY

9	5	1	6	7	3	8	4	2
8	2	6	5	9	4	7	1	3
3	4	7	8	1	2	5	6	9
5	3	8	1	2	6	4	9	7
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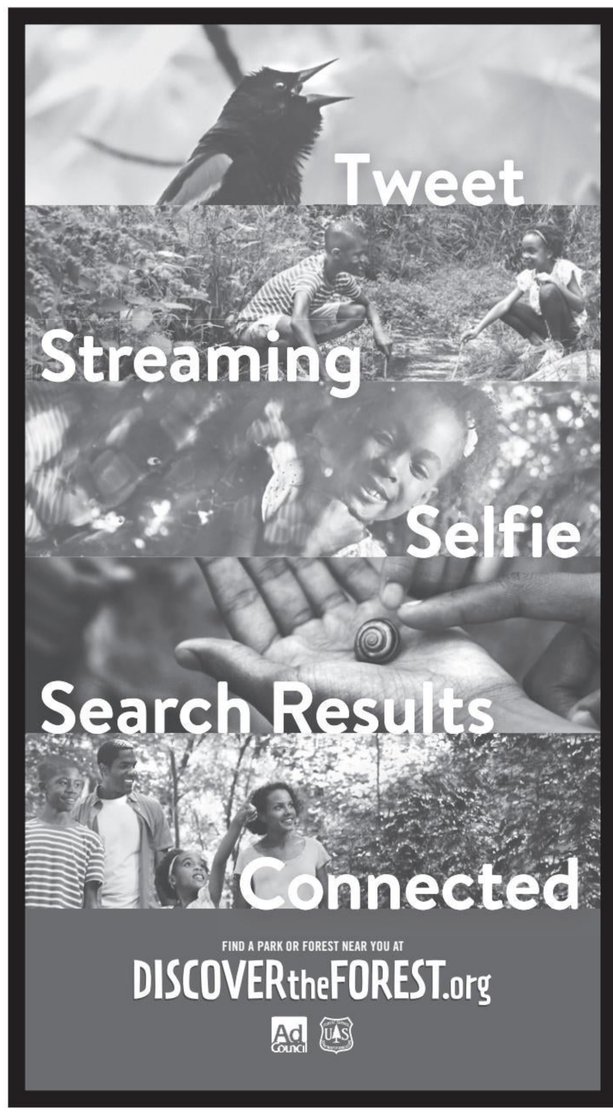

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LOCAL INTELLIGENCE
New Buffalo Times
— SINCE 1942 —

New Buffalo Brownies raise funds during cookie season

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

It's cookie season in New Buffalo.

Chiara Quinn and Frankie Biggs, members of the New Buffalo Brownie Troop 56029, along with troop leaders Kelly Dilling and Sara Biggs, were at Barney's Market Saturday, Feb. 15, selling Girl Scout cookies to shoppers.

Girl Scouts have been there the previous week, as well as at David's Delicatessen. This week, they were at New Buffalo Middle/High School during the basketball game. The next stop is Al's Supermarket Saturday, March 1, followed by Redamak's Saturday, March 8.

This year's cookie line-up includes Thin Mints, Caramel deLites, Peanut Butter Patties, Adventurefuls, Lemonades, Trefoils, Peanut Butter Sandwich and the gluten-free Caramel Chocolate Chip.

Cookies can also be purchased at www.digitalcookie.girlscouts.org, as deliveries can even be made at people's houses.

"I like doing it (selling cookies) because I can raise money to go on field trips and go to shelters and maybe go on tinier fields trips, like beach cleanups," Quinn said.

"It helps us raise money to do fun things for the troop and to help other people," Biggs added.

Cookies are $6 per box. Proceeds from the cookie sales go towards the troop's field trips, which included a trip to Shedd Aquarium last year. The Brownies also went to the Michiana Humane Society to give back to the animals.

"We go to take care of the animals and maybe pet them and donate there (to the shelter)," Biggs said.

A camping trip may also happen for New Buffalo Brownies. Other troops have gone to faraway places, such as Europe.

"When you first start, you don't really have that much money towards the troop, so that's what the fundraisers are for and then that helps us to take them camping, take them to Shedd Aquarium or just give back to the community... The older our troop gets the more it opens up opportunities to do more things because our savings get bigger," Dilling said.

So far, Biggs said she's at a little over 200 boxes, with her goal being 500. She hopes to earn another badge for her sales this year. According to the Girl Scouts website, Girl Scouts may earn official Cookie Business, Financial Literacy, and Entrepreneurship badges at every level of scouting.

If they don't want to buy a box, customers can donate. Boxes of cookies for donations are then shipped to servicemen and servicewomen.

"We work with the Mothers of Troops of Southwest Michigan – we put together boxes and they get mailed to the troops that are in the service," Dilling said.

They've also given to local first responders, such as the New Buffalo Township Fire Department.

The Brownies have done other service projects, such as making cards for veterans and firefighters and police officers every other Sunday.

This Saturday, from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., they'll be at International Bazaar at St. Joseph High School, which is their service unit's fundraiser. Different troops will have food tables set up, with each one representing a different country. Troop 56029 has Ireland, where visitors can stop by and sample sourdough bread and a stew with carrot, beets and potatoes. They've also made a posterboard, with different facts about Ireland, and bracelets and key chains that the Brownies can swap with other Girl Scouts.

Troop 56029 is part of Girl Scouts of Northern Indiana Michiana, which stretches from Fort Wayne to St. Joseph, Michigan, and its service unit is Southwest Michigan Service Unit 201.

Sara and Frankie Biggs and Chiara Quinn and Kelly Dilling sell cookies at Barney's

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